

# *The* **Dental Assistant**

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION

MAY 1932

VOLUME I, NUMBER 6

## A Dental Assistant's Creed

"To be loyal to my employer, my calling and myself.

To develop initiative—having the courage to assume responsibility and the imagination to create ideas and develop them.

To be prepared to visualize, take advantage of, and fulfill the opportunities of my calling.

To be a co-worker—creating a spirit of co-operation and friendliness rather than one of fault-finding and criticism.

To be enthusiastic—for therein lies the easiest way to accomplishment.

To be generous, not alone of my means but of my praise and my time.

To be tolerant with my associates, for at times I too make mistakes.

To be friendly, realizing that friendship bestows and receives happiness.

To be respectful of the other person's viewpoint and condition.

To be systematic, believing that system makes for efficiency.

To know the value of time for both my employer and myself.

To safeguard my health, for good health is necessary for the achievement of a successful career.

To be tactful—always doing the right thing at the right time.

To be courteous—for this is the badge of good breeding.

To walk on the sunny side of the street, seeing the beautiful things in life rather than fearing the shadows.

To keep smiling always."

—J. A. S.



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# *The* Dental Assistant

*Official organ of the Educational and Efficiency Society for Dental Assistants,  
First District, N. Y., Inc.*

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## CONTENTS

A Few Fundamentals.....	John P. Buckley, D.D.S.	2
Oaks From Acorns.....	Mary M. Connolly	5
Outside Inspiration.....	J. C. Fawcett	7
Chicago Dental Assistants Assn.....	Mildred Graham	8
Think It Over.....	Jacob Shapiro, D.D.S.	9
What Do You Read?.....		10
Germes .....		11
Question Box.....	Elizabeth V. Shoemaker	12
E. & E. Society for Dental Assistants.....		13
Editorial Department .....		14
Here and There.....	Robina A. McMurdo	16
Memorial to Mr. George K. Eastman.....		18
Seven Little Thoughts.....	Marie Sillay Shaw	19

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## A Few Fundamentals

### Upon Which A Knowledge of Dental Medicine is Based

by Dr. J. P. Buckley, Hollywood, California.

Past President of the American Dental Assn.

In a letter to the Editor of the "Dental Assistant," upon receiving the first number, I expressed myself regarding the newsy little publication. It is neat, full of practical information and well edited. Without knowing it, one would suspect that it was the product of capable dental assistants. Now comes a request for an article on some phase of "Dental Medicine." In as much as I have written for almost every kind of a Journal which relates to the practice of dentistry, I feel that I should take advantage of this opportunity to complete my record by complying with the request.

No dental office is complete without a cheerful, courteous and efficient lady assistant. In this brief article I shall endeavor to tell your readers how a dental assistant can add to her efficiency by acquiring a working knowledge of such drugs and medicines as are used in dental practice—without detailing the use of any particular remedy. To this end then it would seem that fundamentally an assistant should understand and appreciate the meaning of certain terms so frequently heard in a dental office. Therefore, let us learn what is meant by a medicine and how it differs from a food. A *medicine* is any substance used in the treatment of disease; and a *disease* is a departure from the normal. A study of disease is known as *pathology*. Medicines differ from foods in that the latter furnishes material with which some structure of the body is rebuilt or some vital process is maintained. A *drug* is any substance which may be used as a medicine, or it may be used purely in chemic processes and not directly in the treatment of disease. With this in mind we can remember that all medicines con-

sist of drugs, but all drugs are not used as medicines.

In a dental office we are constantly using the word *remedy*. A *remedy* is a broader term than either drug or medicine and includes, besides material substances, such agents or means employed in treating disease as heat, cold, light, electricity, massage and suggestion. A capable dental assistant should be familiar with the classification of remedies; and, fortunately, such is easy to learn. They are classified as prophylactic, hygienic, imponderable, mechanical, pharmacologic and biologic remedies. These almost explain themselves, as will be shown by their definition.

PROPHYLACTIC REMEDIES are used to prevent disease, as cleaning and polishing tooth surfaces to prevent caries (decay), vaccination to prevent small-pox, or serums to prevent typhoid fever. Prophylaxis means to *prevent*; and it is far better to prevent disease where it can be done than to attempt to cure after it develops.

HYGIENIC REMEDIES assist in the maintenance or promotion of health, such as pure air, water, food, bathing and exercise. These relate to *hygiene*—the science of health.

IMPONDERABLE REMEDIES include heat, cold, light, electricity, ultra-violet and x-ray, radium, massage and suggestion.

MECHANICAL REMEDIES involve the use of bandages, splints, instruments, etc. The correction of irregularities of teeth by the orthodontist is accomplished largely by the proper use of mechanical remedies.

PHARMACOLOGIC REMEDIES are material substances used in the treatment of

disease. Since such substances are known as medicines, this class is also called *medicinal remedies*.

BIOLOGIC REMEDIES are bacteriologic and chemic products obtained from biologic laboratories, and are known as *serums*, *vaccines* and *antitoxins*. As stated heretofore, these remedies are used for the most part as prophylactic measures.

Now that we have learned the meaning of a few of the fundamental terms so frequently used in a dental office relating to the treatment of disease, we will proceed to make a practical application of this knowledge. Whether she fully realizes it or not a dental assistant is probably using daily a class of remedies known as antiseptics and disinfectants more than any other. She should understand what she is doing along these lines, and its importance. This, then, calls for a few more definitions.

ANTISEPTICS are agents which inhibit or have a restraining influence on the life and activity of microorganisms. DISINFECTANTS are agents which destroy microorganisms and their spores. Sometimes the term *germicide* is used interchangeably with disinfectant; and an effort has been made by some writers to distinguish between these two terms, using the term germicide in the sense that the agent simply kills the germ, and disinfectant in the sense that the agent not only kills the germ, but also acts upon and destroys the noxious or poisonous products of germ life. As a matter of fact, this distinction is largely theoretical, for there are few agents which, if used in sufficient strength to kill the germ, will not also act upon and thus destroy or remove their noxious by-products. Personally, I prefer the term disinfectant, and for the reason given.

A DEODORANT is an agent which destroys offensive odors, and inasmuch as the odor generally comes from the noxious products of putrefaction (decomposi-

tion from germ growth), the deodorization results from true disinfection. If a deodorant is used in cases of halitosis, for example, it is far better to search for the cause and correct or remove this, rather than simply substitute one odor for another—even though the one is more pleasant. This is following a cardinal rule in treating disease.

Many agents belong to both the antiseptic and disinfectant class of remedies, depending upon the strength in which they are used. In weak solution they act as antiseptics; in strong solution, as disinfectants. These two classes of remedies are among the most important class employed in dental practice; and, I repeat, are perhaps used by dental assistants more than any other.

Every efficient dental assistant understands thoroughly what is meant by sterilization; and she takes every precaution to keep the instruments and materials used by the dentist in treating diseases of the oral cavity as nearly sterile as they can be kept in a dental office. The importance of cleanliness of the dentist, his assistant and office cannot be over-emphasized. Of course it is understood here that cleanliness does not necessarily mean sterility. *Sterilization* in medical and dental practice means a method or process by which the destruction or removal of all microscopic living organisms and their spores is accomplished. Such living organisms are known as bacteria or germs, the term I have been using quite often in this article; and bacteria are unicellular (one-celled) organisms of *vegetable* origin. Many lay people, including some dental assistants, I fear, think of bacteria as being a "bug" of some kind—of animal origin. It is not. A bacteria is just as much a *vegetable*, coming from plant life, as is a carrot, for example. This may seem strange, but it is true.

Some bacteria, under certain conditions, undergo a transformation into a

resting stage when they are called *spores*. In the spore state they are able to resist influences which ordinarily would kill the bacteria. It is interesting for a dental assistant to know that most disease-producing bacteria do not form spores and, therefore, are easily killed by heating to 100° centigrade—the boiling point of water. An object which is free from living microorganisms is spoken of as being “sterile,” but it should be remembered that this condition can be maintained only so long as the necessary precautions are taken to prevent contact with the atmosphere or other media or instruments which may not be free from germs. In a dental office we endeavor to keep our operating instruments and material, such as cotton, gauze, etc., as nearly sterile as can be done. This is the ideal we try to reach and maintain; but with it all we must use common sense and judgment.

In all surgical work the ideal condition sought is the absence of disease-producing germs (asepsis), rather than to depend upon the chemic destruction of them at the time of operating. With this end in view, the instruments are sterilized by boiling, and the site of the operation as well as the operator's hands are disinfected by washing in certain solutions. Strictly speaking, infected animal tissue cannot be sterilized by employing disinfectants. An ideal disinfectant would be an agent which, employed in certain strength solution in a septic process or disease, would kill the disease-producing germs and destroy or remove the poisonous by-products without acting deleteriously upon the animal cells which form the tissues involved. But bacteriologists inform us that the cell-wall of a vegetable cell (bacteria) is less permeable to disinfecting agents than is the cell-wall of the animal cell. Therefore, in our present state of knowledge we should not employ disinfectants as such in our effort to kill the germ when

its habitat is among living animal cells. Much work has been done along these lines in recent years, but it is questionable, regardless of the claims for certain remedies, that a disinfectant has been discovered which meets this demand. It becomes necessary, then, to attack these germs in another manner. This can be done by the use of certain antiseptic agents which check the growth and activity of the invading germs, cripple them, as it were, and which agents are just sufficiently irritating to the animal cells to produce stimulation. This stimulating or awakening process on the part of the animal cells will cause the latter to attack and destroy the already crippled vegetable cells, thus bringing about Nature's method of sterilization. In the treatment of infected wounds, Carrel, of the Rockefeller Institute, differentiates between *absolute* sterility and what he calls *surgical* sterility. This author claims that in the treatment of such cases absolute sterility is neither necessary nor desirable—a degree of sterility recognized as surgical sterility is all that is required. This conclusion is reached by virtue of the fact that a limited number of germs in a part provokes a fight on the part of Nature in which the latter is victorious.

Perhaps I have waded in unintentionally here a little deeper than I should have done for a dental assistant; but you can at least study the facts presented and consult with your dentist employer. He will be pleased to know that you are trying to improve yourself and are interested in matters of this kind. But do not let the statement of Carrel lead you to become careless in the sterilization and care of dental instruments. Will close by expressing the hope that I have stimulated your readers to a greater interest in this particular phase of their work; and I wish all of you continued success in your chosen field.



## Oaks From Acorns

by Mary M. Connolly, Cincinnati, Ohio

Pas: President of the Cincinnati Dental Assistants Assn.  
Chairman of the Clinics and Exhibit Com. of the A.D.A.A.

The expression is often used when making comparisons, of something being as "big and strong as an oak," or the "mighty oak." I wonder if we ever stop to think, when hearing that expression, of the origin of the "mighty oak"? This majestic tree sprang from a tiny acorn, a small seed possibly, dropped from the mouth of a little bird. Nourished by Mother Earth, watered by the gentle rains, and warmed by the glowing sun, it grows in height and strength. Each year putting forth new branches, it endures through the chill winds and snows of winters, and the sun and heat of summers, because of its strength and greatness.

I have in mind another tree, which I am naming the American Dental Assistants Association, an organization of women following the calling of Dental Assisting. Several years ago, almost nine to be exact, a small group of daring souls (Dental Assistants), feeling that the safety and welfare of the public demanded educated service for its protection, and that the duties of the Dental Assistant in her field was akin to those of the medical nurse in hers, she should be equally well trained and educated. This small group planted a seed like the tiny acorn, which took root and grew into a sapling. Having been planted in fertile soil, it thrived and flourished. Each year it buds forth with new branches growing in height and strength, because it has been carefully watched and cared for. This organized association, with its influence for good and for elevating the standard of the Dental Assistant is invaluable, because, by means of this affiliation, young women who serve dentistry as assistants may improve themselves

through the educational advantages of lectures, clinical demonstrations, discussions, instructions, and special class work offered to them through their respective societies. Organized association is strength, it is the means whereby constructive ideas may be proposed and developed which could never be realized by an individual.

Turning back the pages of history to time when there was no medium of association or contact for the dental assistant, how different was her outlook. Her knowledge pertaining to her work was limited to the teachings of the dentist with whom she was associated; she was familiar only with his way. She did not have the advantage of meeting and mingling with others engaged in the same mutual endeavor. With the organizing of societies for Dental Assistants the field was opened to them whereby they might gain practical knowledge in the various branches of their work, under the guidance and supervision of the Dental Profession. It also affords the opportunity of contact through meetings—local, state and national, where ideas may be exchanged, important questions brought up, discussed and cared for in an impartial way.

This organization, now in its ninth year, has in a very definite way established new and important standards for those of our calling. These standards are sustained by our four corner-stones: "Education"—mental training, equipment for more than ordinary service. A broadening of one's viewpoint towards one's "Job" in life.—"Efficiency"—a more thorough understanding of our responsibilities; a constant broadening of our experiences resulting in more effective methods of application.—"Loy-

alty"—team work in rendering every possible assistance to the doctor or those with whom we serve, and a sympathetic and understanding interest in the patients. Loyalty to our "Ideals," to our "Association," to our "Co-Members."—"Service"—unselfish service for the betterment of man kind; capability of rendering an intelligent service—"A service with a smile." Service to each other as co-workers.

By adhering to these standards and grasping the opportunities presented to us through our societies, continuing our efforts to obtain a better understanding, enlisting the interest and seeking the advice of the dental profession, by performing our duties faithfully, we hope to receive recognition and to realize the purpose of our aims and ideals; Dental Assisting a profession. In our organizations, national or otherwise, there are several interests which draw the members closer together. "*First*," there is the pleasure of contact, or the coming together in the interest of a common cause, to carry on the work of raising the standard of the dental assistant so that she, through this contact, may equip herself to serve more efficiently the dentist and his patients. Contact also means the developing of friendship, and a better understanding of the other person. "*Second*," there is the inspiration received from association with those who are aiming to achieve the highest ethical standards for themselves and for the welfare of their organization. "*Third*," the thrill that comes from seeing plans worked out, the growth and advancement of your society and the thought that you are an active and interested member of that group of splendid, progressive women.

The success of an organization must intimately and ultimately depend on each and every member grasping the significance of her vocation. The member who understands the responsibilities of her

vocation will realize more and more the great influence of her organization. The progress of an organization depends to a great extent upon its leaders—by leaders I mean the executive officers. They are the ones chosen by the members to carry on the work, to guide and direct the progress of the society. While each and every member is a vital part of an organization, it is to the leaders that we look for wise guidance.

In turn successful leadership is evinced by cooperation with one's associates, and in the inspiration and appreciation of one's subordinates. On wise leadership depends the progress of any undertaking. When you find poor and indifferent leadership, you also find lack of interest and defeat of purpose; therefore, your officers should be chosen impartially, for their ability and initiative. Leaders should have vision for lowly duty as well as an exalted one for honors, and fully realize the responsibility accruing to their office.

The Committees are the heart and muscles of an organization. If each committee functions properly things are done; but if the committees merely talk and dream about what should be done, an organization will never receive the recognition due it. Committee work brings a maximum number of members into active service, and increases their interest. Such service brings to members a better understanding and a deeper interest in the progress and the welfare of their organization.

This American Association of Dental Assistants was organized for a very definite purpose—the advancement and elevation of the dental assistant to a dignified status. It is the greatest institution of its kind, and its influence for good can be limitless, provided its activities are directed along proper channels. Things useless and indifferent are easily accomplished; it is the big things, the worth while efforts, that require

courage and strength of character. The creating of a profession for the dental assistant is a noble and humane work, allied as it is with the profession of dentistry in service to humanity. It is a big thing to be accomplished. Oliver Wendell Holmes has said: "The great thing in this world is not so much where we stand, but in what direction we are going."

We, the dental assistants of today, are the pioneers. What this organization of dental assistants will be in the future depends on us, because it is two fold in its effect. When our ideals are lived up to, we help to uplift the profession of Dentistry, and with it those of us who are members of the organization of dental assistants. Our "*Oak*" is growing; year by year it is putting forth new branches. These branches are the newly organized societies of progressive groups of young women who serve dentistry as assistants. Let us continue to watch and care for this "*Oak*" of ours, looking forward to the time when it too will be our "*Mighty Oak*," an inspiration to those who follow, an ideal and a hope to spur them on to challenge the best that is in them.

(Read before the Indiana State Dental Ass'n. Meeting. May, 18, 1931).

## Outside Inspiration

by J. C. Fawcett, Brooklyn, N. Y.

Whether you are a dentists' assistant or his secretary, or acting in both capacities, you cannot escape being a buffer between the door-bell and the operating room.

You know of course, if you have the right attitude toward your job, that the dentist must be relieved of all worries and interruptions which would interfere with his professional efficiency. You no doubt endeavor to handle as many questions and duties as possible on your own responsibility, without bothering him.

All this has been carefully and clearly shown in other articles in "THE DENTAL ASSISTANT" by other writers. I merely refer to the duty of being a buffer in order to make the point which I particularly want to stress; which is this: Be a Buffer but not an Insulator! Don't make the mistake of being so efficient that a new idea or helpful suggestion has no chance to get to you or past you.

Dental salesmen are the ambassadors for the dental dealer and hold their jobs on their ability to be useful to the dentists they call upon. As a class, they are not "drifters," but specialists. They are usually brought up in the dental business or in some related line and stick to it all their lives just as the dentist himself does. They have a fund of experience with and information about dental supplies and equipment, which you will do well to make use of. They are constantly on the alert to discover and understand the merits of new materials, devices and instruments and to advise you for or against them. Very often, a busy dentist does not learn about new labor saving devices or methods, much to his regret, until they have been in use by other dentists for months or even years.

"Salesman" is perhaps the wrong name for representatives from reliable dental business houses. I do not know any dental salesman who uses high-pressure or other selling methods that are distasteful to his professional customers—"idea-bringer and outside assistant" would be nearer to the correct term, if we could put all that in one word. You naturally wish to guard your employer's financial interests, and in this the salesman can be of real assistance; he can readily tell you the advantage of purchasing in quantities the items that are used daily, which in many instances would represent a saving of 20%

(Concluded on page 13)

## Chicago Dental Assistants Association

by Mildred Graham, Chicago, Ill.

### CLASSES, CLINICS, AND LECTURES

The reason the Chicago Dental Assistants Association came into existence was a desire on the part of a few to create a source of education and information pertaining particularly to the duties of a dental assistant, in other words, a medium for the acquiring of knowledge and for the exchange of ideas. This is the basis on which every component of the American Dental Assistants Association is founded. Education, Efficiency, Loyalty, and Service are the watchwords of the National Society, and you will notice that *education* is first in line. The association provides opportunities through which one can become a well trained assistant, more skilled than the average. The Class and Clinic Committee is the hub around which the whole group revolves.

This is the most important committee functioning within a society for dental assistants. With them lies the task of carrying out and remaining true to the real purpose. The effort put forth to form classes is not a little and spreads over the entire year and into the next. These classes have to be thought out and worked out before they are offered to the membership. The task of arranging classes most desirable and most beneficial is always on hand. After the kind of class is decided on, the matter of getting someone to present it and a place in which to give it, is often a problem. A time convenient to the instructor and to the majority of members must be arranged.

The generosity of those who give of their time and energy to teach us is not overlooked and is appreciated a thousand-fold.

Classes not only nourish the mind but renew interest in our work and help us

to overcome that "tired of our work feeling" that everyone feels at times. You go back to the office with renewed enthusiasm and a keen appreciation of the responsibility that rests with you.

The reasons for taking courses and attending clinics and lectures are many. Dentistry is progressing rapidly, and along with it dental assisting must progress or fall by the wayside. Technics are constantly changing, and new methods being introduced that must be learned if we are to keep abreast with the times. That a position does not require a knowledge of certain phases of dental assisting at present, does not mean that it will not in the future, or that a future position may not. Knowledge does not have to be put into practice, but it is a decided advantage to have it when it is needed. To miss a class because you are not doing the work that is being taught is shortsighted. That which you learn may help you to understand your immediate duties better. You can learn new things that you may be able to introduce into your office with equal benefit to your employer and yourself. Though one is well experienced and getting very favorable results in a certain phase of her work, she should grasp every opportunity to learn so that she can attain a greater degree of expertness.

While you may be securely and comfortably situated in your present position do not lose sight of the fact that a number of things could happen that would cast you out of employment and that you would have to rely entirely upon your own ability when getting another. The routine of another office would be different and your duties completely changed.

Your vocation is the source of your  
(See page 9)

## Think It Over

"Recently an opportunity presented itself for us to get acquainted with the activities of an organization that should command the attention of every dental practitioner. We refer to the Brooklyn Dental Assistants Study Club of the Second District; a live, buoyant, sincere group of young women organized for the improvement of dental conditions in relation to their daily office routine.

How many of us realize the important role the WELL TRAINED DENTAL ASSISTANT plays in our daily routine of office practice? Her service has grown upon us, as modern inventions have, and we give neither time nor thought to their real value. Do we appreciate the numberless tasks automatically imposed upon her which save us time, worry, and annoyance? We arrive at the office in the morning. Everything is in its proper place, neat, clean, and refreshing. The reception room has had that additional womanly touch put to it, making it much more attractive and wholesome. The appointment book has been carefully arranged for the day, cancellations and new appointments properly taken care of. Accounts adjusted, bills mailed, merchandise ordered, and all through the day telephone calls answered and recorded. Instruments always at hand for the next operation; patients properly seated with a few kind words of encouragement. So on through the entire day acting as a buffer for your tired nerves, and a bulwark against any interference. How much time and labor she has saved you during the day is almost incalculable.

With all the duties pressing these young women for time they somehow manage to set aside a few evenings to meet with their fellow workers and to discuss ways and means for greater efficiency, better service, and closer co-

operation. Such ambition deserves a great deal of recognition on our part for we are the ultimate gainers of any greater efficiency on the part of our dental assistants. Every practitioner employing an assistant should encourage them in their efforts to reach the height of their ambition, to join such an organization. Their aim is a worthy one and their program one which will make for better service.

The Second District Dental Society (New York) has permitted them to use their clinic quarters for the meetings. What they will learn and accomplish will reflect itself in our daily practice, making it more than worth our while to contribute."

—J. S.

*This tribute appeared in the Bulletin of the Second District Dental Society for April, and is from the pen of Dr. Jacob Shapiro, Contributing Editor. We take pleasure in reprinting it here. No doubt Dr. Shapiro's appreciation of the value and importance of this society for dental assistants, will find a responsive echo in the minds of every dentist who knows the aims and purpose of the society for dental assistants that may be located in his city or state.*

J. A. S.

## Chicago D. A. Assn.

*Continued*

daily bread. Fortify yourself for the future with a reserve of knowledge.

The above is intended as a tribute to the Class and Clinic Committee in appreciation of the splendid work they have done and are doing. And to stimulate further interest in class work.

*(Reprint from Chicago Dental Society Bulletin, March 31st, 1932. Every society for dental assistants being based on this plan, this article is pertinent to all and we take pleasure in bringing it before our readers.)*



## What Do You Read?

*"Tis knowledge we seek. With  
knowledge comes success"*



If the dental assistant would intelligently perform the duties of her service to the dentist and patient, she should have a broad acquaintance with all matters that affect the dental profession as well as those that pertain directly to the practical phases of her work. Nothing will aid her more to understand what the dentist is trying to accomplish in health service, and the part she plays in rendering that service, than well directed reading. The following current articles are suggested:

### Journal of the American Dental Association

April 1932

"Professional Service Versus Salesmanship"	Page 573
"Responsibility of the Dental Profession Concerning Health"	Page 591
"Cutaneous Affections of the Hands of the Dentist"	Page 613
"A New Precision Casting Technic"	Page 630
"Economics and the Dentist"	Page 666
"Advertising in Dentistry"	Page 670
"Accepted Dental Remedies"	Page 681
"Westinghouse Announces Development for Reading X-Ray Films"	Page 707

### The Dental Cosmos

"Has Vitamin B. a Role in the Prevention of Caries?"	Page 334
"Dental Prophylaxis and Care of Children Under Six Years of Age"	Page 340
"Practical Hints"	Page 397

### Oral Hygiene

"In Which an Ax Is Ground"	Page 706
"The Teaching of Good Health Consciousness"	Page 711
"Educational Publicity"	Page 715
"Ask Oral Hygiene"	Page 720
"Feeling Dentistry's Pulse"	Page 746
"Dental Book-keeping"	Page 755

### The Dental Survey

"Sterilization of Dental Instruments"	Page 33
"The Study of Dental Incomes"	Page 46
"Diet and Dental Caries"	Page 60
"Diet and Dental Nutrition"	Page 62
"Patients I Have Met"	Page 68

"T. NATSISSA LATNED"

## GERMS

What is that motto that those D.A.'s have at the head of their list of suggested reading matter? Oh, yes.—“’Tis knowledge we seek, with knowledge comes success”—Well, I sure got a dose of knowledge the other day, and mad!! Oh you “Bass Silly,” was I mad . . . In my excitement I almost fell and broke my neck. How come? ’Twas like this.—You know at the present time, we are not urgently occupied in our office and so the Doc took a day off and went fishing. I did hear the D.A. tell a Bond Salesman (what’s a Bond Salesman?—You didn’t know there were any left—don’t interrupt me) that the Doc had been called to the hospital for a consultation. That is what is called “diplomacy.” I know he went fishing because he told the D.A. to be sure to put his bottle of (chorus by the assembled multitude “We know, we know what bottle you mean, but you aren’t going to put that in writing are you?”—annihilating glances from S.P.) well, as I started to say before I was interrupted, he told the D.A. to be sure to put his bottle of mercurochrome in his bag in case of emergencies.—And so we had the day to ourselves, and me and the D.A. seeking knowledge and success, we read a book called “Folklore of the Teeth” and we found that some of those old timers, way back in the good old days of Egyptian Culture (what do I mean by Egyptian Culture?—I don’t mean the kind of “culture” associated with bacteriology. In those days we hadn’t yet been “cultivated”) well, in those good old days they thought that caries and tooth-aches were caused by WORMS.—Yes, WORMS; and listen to this, you Mike Robe—“The worm etiology of toothache was considered a scientific fact by many noted physicians and medical writers during the Middle Ages, and as late as in the seventeenth century men like Johannes Schultes of Ulm, or Nicolaus Tulp of Amsterdam, still were convinced of the truth of the “worm” theory. It was reserved to Pierre Fauchard, the great founder of modern dentistry, to cast doubts on its reality. . . .” Do you wonder I was mad, and that in my excitement I nearly fell off the D.A.’s left eyebrow where I had found a fine vantage point from where to peruse the printed page. Isn’t it enough that we are being attacked, pursued, persecuted, researched, sterilized, and even robbed of our homes by those diet sharks, and prophylaxis hounds, without being told in a perfectly good looking book, that once upon a time we were nothing but “WORMS.” Bahh!!, two times Bahh!!!!—Shades of Scribonius Largus!—Who was he? We’ll seek knowledge and find out.

Yours, folklore notwithstanding,

—SPIRO KEET. 

# THE QUESTION BOX

Elizabeth V. Shoemaker  
Kew Plaza, Kew Gardens, L. I.

*Q. How is a saturated solution made?*

A. By stirring as much of a powder into warm water as the water will "take up" or absorb. This should be allowed to stand over nite after repeated stirrings. Carefully pour off the top into a container, using filter paper.

*Q. What causes 95% Phenol to crystallize? How liquified?*

A. This will crystallize if exposed to a temperature of 75 degrees or lower. Place container in warm water to liquify. This does not cause deterioration. There is a proprietary preparation of 95% Phenol on the market that does not crystallize under any condition.

*Q. Should one who assists in giving gas be specially trained?*

A. Unquestionably. Many dentists employ registered nurses for this work but at least experience with pulse, respiration and collapse signs is indispensable.

*Q. Do you consider it equally satisfactory to develop two films on one clip?*

A. It is safer to use a clip for each film in developing as the films might overlap and stick together causing streaks or shadows thus interfering with the detail of the Radiograph. It might also be necessary to leave one film in the developer longer than the other in order to bring out the details more clearly.

*Q. Is there any definite length of time one should keep the developer and Hypo Solution?*

A. Developer should be changed according to the number of Radio-

graphs developed. As long as the detail is clear and there is no smeary condition on the film, the developer is good. Never add new developer to an old mix. Hypo Solution keeps indefinitely, if in a colored bottle well corked and this solution may be added to as it evaporates. If a regular developing tank is not used (which is made of hard rubber) glass, china or enamel containers should be used for developing.

*Q. Am I expected to keep the office curtains clean and select the magazines for the reception room? I have just started this kind of work in a new office.*

A. Unless arrangements are made with the person who does the general cleaning in the office for washing the curtains, the Assistant should attend to this or have them sent to the laundry. No work is menial; just the way it is done. Most dentists like to have the Assistant buy the magazines and charge them to office expense. Be guided by the type of patients as to your selection. Most pictorials are enjoyed but one or two of the more serious magazines appeal to mature readers.

*Q. If a patient asks me about the proper diet to overcome decalcification, how should I answer?*

A. Refer all such questions to the dentist. It is most important however that all Assistants know the foods necessary for proper tooth structure and why decalcification occurs and the names of preparations used to overcome this condition.

We invite our readers to send in questions and suggestions. Personal replies will be sent upon receipt of self addressed and stamped envelope. Data must be received the 8th of the month for the issue of the succeeding month.

## E. & E. Society for Dental Assistants 1st District, N. Y., Inc.

### Meeting:

Tuesday, May 10th, 1932, 7:45 p.m., Hotel Pennsylvania, 33rd Street and 7th Avenue, N. Y. City.

This meeting is for members only, being the ANNUAL MEETING. All members are requested to attend promptly at the hour specified. Important business will be transacted.

All officers and chairmen of committees are requested to present their annual reports in writing.

### Election of Officers:

*Constitution—Article IV., Section V.*

"At the regular meeting held in May, election shall take place. . . Installation of officers shall take place at the close of the May meeting."

### Candidates and Their Office:

President — Rosemarie Cornelis—  
Blanche Ferrero.

Vice-President—Mary A. O'Connor.

Recording Secretary—Robina McMurdo (two year term).

Corresponding Secretary — Frances Green.

Treasurer—Fannie Cohen (two year term).

Registrar—Grace Tisné.

### Hear Ye!! Hear Ye!!

On May 5th, at 8 p.m., the Better Business Bureau of the 1st and 2nd District Dental Societies, will hold a meeting at the Hotel Pennsylvania. The members of the E & E Society are urged to attend. Come and hear the topic discussions and see the clinics on "Dental Economics and Secretarial Duties," given by experts. We should attend 100% strong.

### Annual Dinner

The Eleventh Annual Dinner will be held on May 25th, 8 p.m., at the

Barbizon Club, Lexington Avenue and 63rd Street, N. Y. City. In honor of the Washington Bi-Centennial, it will be in the form of a "Martha Washington Cabaret." Strictly informal dress—come in your prints, gingham, or calico gowns, and bring your friends—don't forget the Boy-Friend, but COME. Subscription per cover \$2.00.—Send your check and reservations to Fannie Cohen, Treasurer, 2059 Fulton St., Brooklyn, N. Y. Committee: Blanche Ferrero, Chm.; Frances Green, Fannie Cohen and Mary A. O'Connor, Ex-Officio.

### Clinic Club

Next meeting, Monday, May 16th, 7:30 p.m., at the office of Dr. Henry Fowler, 174 West 96th Street, N. Y. City. Topic "Practical Nursing Aids"—Instruction will be given by a trained nurse from one of the leading hospitals.

(Continued from page 7)

and enable you to always have available a sufficient stock of necessities.

Let all salesmen know that you respect your own time, but do not make the mistake of denying them a reasonable and regular opportunity to talk with you and the doctor himself. Try to arrange so that a few minutes can be spared between appointments for men who represent reputable business houses and call for legitimate business reasons. Remember that their time is worth something and that their call is made with the intention of being mutually helpful.

Real efficiency for the dental assistant never consists in cutting off the dentist from all outside contacts. On the contrary she is on the alert to take advantage of salesmen's visits in order to make herself that much more useful and valuable to her employer.

# The Dental Assistant

A Monthly Publication

A Journal for Dental Assistants Devoted to Their Interests and Education.

All communications for publication must be in the hands of the Editor on or before the tenth of the month previous to publication. Publication of statements, opinions, or other data is not to be understood as an endorsement of same by the magazine or its publishers.

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NEW YORK CITY, MAY, 1932

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## EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT

### The Dental Assistant

Why does a young woman choose the field of dental assisting as her vocation? What are the attractions of the occupation? I believe we can find our answer in the following. Individuals seek remunerative employment because they have a need for the financial compensation that is the reward for their work or their service. This is no doubt the chief urge of any woman who seeks a position in a dental office. Coupled with this need of earning a living we may class in two distinct groups the women who choose dentistry for their field of economic activity.

In the first of these two groups we find the women who only superficially consider the possibilities of their field of activity. They enter dentistry as assistants having been attracted to the so called *Professional Atmosphere*; they are attracted because it is *something different*; they see the dental office, the work therein, the dentist,—through rose colored glasses. The dental office is such a *romantic* place; the work is *so easy*. Miss Blank, the nurse in her dentist's office is always so unhurried and smiling, and never seems to be working hard; she looks so nice in her snappy white uniform. The office is so attractive; spick and span, everything shining; flowers on the desk and in the waiting room, it is so restful and quiet, surely it must be wonderful to work in such an environment. And the dentist, that clever, understanding person; her family dentist has always been like their family physician, a person apart, superior to the general run of humanity. A superman; never cross always sympathetic and ready to listen to all her troubles. It never enters her head that she is *all wrong*, that she is selecting her vocation purely on imaginary concepts, and as far as she personally is concerned, she has given absolutely no consideration to her fitness for the service actually required.

Fortunately for dentistry and for dental assisting, we have the other group. The group of intelligent, constructive thinking women who study all the possibilities of a position in dentistry, and know their own fitness for the work. They have no illusions about the actualities of the service, they know that they will have to contribute to their daily tasks something more than routine, mechanical application; they realize that in a humanitarian health service, it takes initiative and resourcefulness to meet all kinds of unexpected, sometimes unpleasant, situations. They *want* to be a dental assistant because it will permit them to find an outlet for their great desire to earn their daily bread in an environment that will make possible a service to those who are in need of sympathetic, helpful care. These women make ideal assistants, they love their work, they look upon it as a life's work. These are the women that we find in dentistry today that have served



fifteen, twenty, twenty-five, and yes, thirty years; they are the backbone of our calling.

The moral of this story is that all women who are in dental offices are not suited to the occupation of dental assisting, and that is why so many dentists complain they cannot find an assistant that proves satisfactory. Of course, we might say something about the lack of good judgment on the part of many dentists in selecting their assistants, and this from several angles, but this is another story too; some day we may have the courage to talk about it.

—J. A. S.

### System and Systems

Economics might be defined as the study of business in its social aspect; the word "business" being used in its broadest sense to cover all lawful ways of making a living. For the making of our living we have chosen as our occupation the profession of "Dental Assistant." Upon entering this profession we immediately become a part of the dental system; we *must* understand this system and *actually* become a part of it. We must not only be able to wholeheartedly cooperate with, but to thoroughly understand the aims and plan of dentistry for without understanding there would be no solving of the confusing problems which invariably arise and which are peculiar to the profession. Our tasks at times may seem difficult, but if we are systematic and apply the simple common sense principle of—one thing at a time—and we do that one thing to the very best of our ability, many rough places on the road to success will become smooth. Understanding the dentist and the patient and rendering valuable service to both, is this not what we are trying so hard to achieve?

There must be a definite understanding and a system in all that we do in our daily service for the success of our dental office. At first thought our responsibilities may seem very elementary, but given careful study, it is apparent that our work is a real important one. It may be easy to be familiar with something, and to even work with it, without understanding it, but it is of great importance to know what it is, thereby eliminating the chances of failure. Selfishness must be erased from our role, but the faculty of observation must be cultivated. From an individual point of view, a division of our work may mean specialization. Individuals specialize because by restricting their work to a single field or process, they become more efficient along that certain line than if their efforts were more varied, "Practice makes Perfect." Anything repeated often enough becomes a habit; our bodies and our brains adjust themselves to regular performance; we may therefore become better assistants in some particular specialization, and this may open a new thought for our profession although it is mainly applicable in the larger dental offices where several assistants are employed.

I know of no better way of gaining more technical knowledge in our service than by faithfully attending the meetings, the clinics, and the study classes which are made possible to us by our society for dental assistants, wherever we may be located. These societies are doing a fine constructive work for their members, and it has been gratifying to note the harmonious spirit among the members who have partaken of these activities, and the splendid results that are achieved from such attendance.

We are not only measured by the years we serve in our office, but also by our good and gracious deeds.

*Florence D. Clark, Contributing Editor.*

## HERE AND THERE

Robina A. McMurdo  
140 East 80th St., N. Y. C.

### American D.A. Assn.

Eighth Annual Meeting, September 12-15, 1932, Buffalo, N. Y. Plan now to attend this meeting as a part of your vacation. Dentists, Dental Hygienists, and Dental Assistants will be made cordially welcome.

RUTH F. ROGERS, Pres.

RUTH M. CLARK, Gen. Secy.  
Suite 1-4 Scofield Bldg., Minot, N. Dakota.

### D.A. Assn., State of N. Y.

Fourth Annual Meeting, May 11-13, Albany, N. Y.—May 11th, 8 p.m., joint meeting with the Dental Hygienists Assn., State of N. Y.—May 12th, 2 p.m. Business Session—Clinics, in the mornings of May 12th and 13th.—Dentists, Dental Hygienists, and Dental Assistants will be cordially welcome.

ZOA H. DICKHOUT, Pres.

JULIA SCHULTZ, Secy.  
146 E. Water St., Elmira, N. Y.

PROGRAM of the Joint Opening Session of the D.H. Assn., and the D.A. Assn., State of New York, Centennial Hall, Albany, N. Y., Wednesday, May 11th, 8 p.m.

Presiding Officer: Dr. F. B. Howe, President-Elect, Dental Soc., State of New York.

Addresses of Welcome: Dr. George Vanderpool, President, Dental Soc., State of N. Y., and Alta Gates, D.H., President, Watertown D.H. Assn.

Response: Mary A. O'Connor, President, E & E Soc. for D.A., 1st Dist., N. Y.

This department is devoted to ALL the societies affiliated with the American Dental Assistants Association, who are URGED to send in news items each month. We also will be pleased to publish items of interest from the dental societies and from the societies for dental hygienists. Data must be received by the 8th of each month for the activities of the succeeding month.

Greetings: Zoa Dickhout, President D.A. Assn., State of N. Y., and Blanche Doyle, President D.H. Assn., State of N. Y.

Address: Dr. William Dwight Tracy, N. Y. City.

Introduction of Honor Guests.

### D.A. Study Club of Bklyn., N. Y.

The Third Annual Meeting will be held May 20, 1932, 8 p.m., at 62 Hanson Place, Brooklyn, N. Y.

FLORENCE CLARK, Pres.

MARGUERITE W. SIMPSON, Cor. Secy.  
103 Pierrepont St., Bklyn., N. Y.

### Georgia State D.A. Assn.

The Georgia State D.A. Association reports a new district just organized at Savannah, Ga. This is the fourth district society organized in the State. The Third Annual Meeting of the State Assn. will be held in Atlanta, Ga., June 8-9, 1932. A cordial welcome is extended to all dental assistants to attend.

PHOEBE HAYES, Pres.

619 Grant Bldg., Atlanta, Ga.

### Texas

From Texas comes the news of a recently organized group. The Eastern Texas D.A. Assn. For information address: Doris Moffat, c/o Dr. W. L. Munden, Davidson - Blalock Bldg., Marshall, Texas.

### Tennessee State D.A. Assn.

The Second Annual Meeting will be held May 9-11, 1932, at Memphis, Tenn. Headquarters, Hotel Peabody.

DOROTHY AUPIED, Pres.

Suite 1107, First Nat'l Bank Bldg.,  
Memphis, Tenn.

### Nebraska State D.A. Assn.

The Fifteenth Annual Meeting will be held at Lincoln, Nebraska, May 18th, 1932.

MILDRED STEVENSON, PRES.  
1134 G Street, Lincoln, Neb.

### Massachusetts

A society has just been organized at Boston, Mass. The members will present clinics before the State Dental Meeting at Boston, May 2-5, 1932. For information address: KARIN ERICSON, 12 Bay State Road, Boston, Mass.

### St. Louis D.A. Society

The society will present clinics at the Illinois State Dental Meeting, May 10-12 at Springfield, Ill.

LYDIA W. AMELING, Sec'y.,  
6629 Delmar Blvd., St. Louis, Mo.

### American Dental Hygienists Assn.

Will convene for its ninth annual meeting in Buffalo, N. Y., September 12th to 15th, 1932. A varied and interesting program is planned. A cordial invitation is extended to dentists, dental assistants, and dental hygienists.

EVELYN M. GUNNARSON, Pres.  
475 Fifth Ave., N. Y. City

### Dental Hygienists Assn., State of New York

Will hold its 12th annual meeting, May 11 to 13, 1932, at the Centennial Hall, Albany, N. Y. "We extend a very cordial invitation to all members of the dental profession, dental hygienists, and dental assistants."

BLANCHE A. DOYLE, Pres.  
100 West 59th St., N. Y. City

## THE QUESTION BOX

(Continued)

**DO YOU KNOW THAT:** A bottle of saturated solution of Bi-carbonate of Soda should be kept in sight in all laboratories as a neutralizer for any acids that may be spilt. A small container of this solution should also be kept in the dental cabinet for emergencies at the chair. Immediate use of Bi-carbonate will prevent a burn on the skin or a hole in material.

**DO YOU KNOW THAT:** Dental Assistants should familiarize themselves with the names of all patients so that no awkward moments occur when greeting persons in the reception room. It should never be necessary to ask a name unless it is a new patient.

**DO YOU KNOW THAT:** Hydrochloric acid will remove teeth from bridges or gold fixtures (if they have been cemented on) in three hours. Place immediately in a saturated solution of Bi-carbonate of soda. This applies to all materials subjected to Hydrochloric acid.

**DO YOU KNOW THAT:** A cotton roll one inch long is advantageous in preventing elongation and the elimination of Antrum shadows, if placed between the teeth and the film when taking Radiographs.

**DO YOU KNOW THAT:** To toughen plaster models, immerse in an alum solution for half an hour, one part iron-free alum and six parts water.

ELIZABETH V. SHOEMAKER.

## Memorial Resolutions

MR. GEORGE K. EASTMAN

*Adopted by the Oral Hygiene Committee of Greater New York, March 15, 1932*

WHEREAS, divine providence has removed from our midst, our esteemed and beloved fellow citizen, Mr. George K. Eastman; and

WHEREAS, his entire life was devoted to a useful application of his pronounced abilities as business man, visualizing citizen and altruistic philanthropist; and

WHEREAS, conspicuous among his efforts to further human welfare was his outstanding devotion to the cause of dental health education and the practical propagation of preventive dental practice for the children of the entire world; and

WHEREAS, it has always been the purpose of this Committee to foster in every way, and to seek the helping hand of those who can aid in fostering, the cause of dental health education especially for children; be it therefore

RESOLVED, That we, the members of the Oral Hygiene Committee of Greater New York, hereby express our deep feeling of appreciation for the immense impetus given and imperishable good performed by Mr. George K. Eastman in his many noble dental philanthropies; and we express our deep sorrow at the loss of such a valued friend and humanitarian; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a page of our minutes be set aside and the Secretary be instructed to inscribe thereon these Resolutions, that a copy be sent to the bereaved family and a copy to the professional journals for publication.

H. SHIRLEY DWYER, Chairman.

JOSEPH H. KAUFFMANN, Secretary.

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EDUCATIONAL AND EFFICIENCY SOCIETY FOR DENTAL ASSISTANTS  
1st District, N. Y., Inc.

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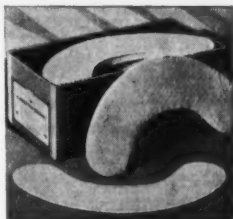
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26

## Seven Little Thoughts

by Marie Sillay Shaw

Member of D. N. & A. Assn., Atlanta, Ga.

**Hardwork**—Anything worth while means lots of hard work, and its with the aid of every Dental Assistant that our Captain may reach her goal.

**Interest**—Showing that we care, and that we want to do our best.

**Co-operation**—Is an Ideal—and should exist in the minds and hearts and purposes of every Co-Worker. It is founded on mutual confidence and trust.

**Vision**—Of larger and finer things.

**Unity**—All one body; we work and pull together, which will tend to make us stronger and will create prestige.

**Progress**—Go forward and say—Yes, I'll do my part, and keep searching for new ideas.

**Joy**—There is joy in duty well done and the knowledge that each has done her part.

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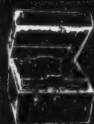




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